Bird Flu

2637. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'Bird Flu' after a lull of 11 months, is back in India with an outbreak of high magnitude in a village near Imphal, Manipur and about 1.5 lakh birds have been affected and have to be destroyed;

(b) if so, what is the source of this virus/infection and whether it is the same strain that the Maharashtra tribal area had in 2006;

(c) what are the surveillance mechanism mounted in this area besides taking adequate and effective measures in other parts of the country;

(d) whether it is safe to consume chicken and eggs now-a-days; and

(e) whether the preventive and after care mechanism of the earlier incidence of bird flu was weak and inadequate from the present experience and occurrence now happened in Manipur?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The last outbreak was reported at Jalgaon, Maharashtra on 18-4-2006. India declared freedom from Avian Influenza on 11-8-2006.

The recent outbreak was notified on 25.7.2007. The disease appears to be localized to only one poultry establishment at village Chingmeirong, East Imphal district, Manipur, where only 134 poultry were affected. However, about 3,40,000 birds were culled in control and containment measures in the infected zone as per Action Plan of Government of India.

(b) Preliminary laboratory investigations reveals that the virus isolated from Manipur is significantly different from virus isolated from Maharashtra during 2006.

A committee has been constituted to assess the possible source of infection of the outbreak of Avian Influenza in poultry in Manipur.

(c) Details are enclosed as a Statement (*See* below).

(d) As per World Health Organization (WHO), "poultry and poultry products can be safely consumed provided these items are properly cooked and properly handled during food preparation. The H5N1 virus is sensitive to heat. Normal temperatures used for cooking (70^0C in all parts of the food) will kill the virus. Consumers need to be sure that all parts of the poultry are fully cooked (no "pink" parts) and that eggs, too, are properly cooked (no "runny" yolks)".

(e) The question does not arise in view of '(b)' above.

Statement

Details of measures taken to prevent the spread of the disease of Avian Influenza

The following measures were taken in Manipur to prevent the spread of Avian Influenza:

1. Demarcation of infected and surveillance areas was carried out in accordance with the Action Plan. An area of 0-5 kms. was designated as

the Infected Zone and a further area of 5-10 kms. was designated as the Surveillance Zone.

2. The poultry, both backyard and commercial, has been culled in a radius of 0-5 kms around the affected farm premises. More than 3.36 lakh birds have been killed in the control operations.

3. Other infected materials such as poultry eggs, feathers, feed, feed materials, protective cloth used by the staff engaged in operations etc. has also been destroyed. More than 131 metric tones of feed material and nearly 28 thousand eggs have been destroyed.

4. Thereafter cleaning and dissemination of the infected premises/area has been undertaken, which is under progress.

5. Physical surveillance in the 5-10 km area is being continued to ascertain if there is any further unusual mortality. No unusual mortality has been reported in the surveillance zone as well as from anywhere else in the State.

6. The Government of India has maintained strategic reserve of poultry vaccines. The option of vaccination is thus available to the country. However, vaccination has not yet been introduced in the country.

7. The personnel involved in containment work were provided personal protective equipment and brought under cover of Tamiflu by the health authorities.

8. It is the policy of the Government of India to pay compensation to owner for culled poultry. The costs are being shared on a 50:50 basis with the State Government. More than 70 lakhs Indian Rupees has been paid as compensation.

Moreover, the following measures have also been taken up by the Government of India to prevent the access of bird flu into the country.

1. Action Plan for Preparedness, Control and Containment of Avian Influenza for Animal Husbandry has been prepared and circulated by Government of India to facilitate action by the State Governments.

2. Import of poultry and poultry products has been banned completely from Avian Influenza positive countries.

3. All the State Governments have been alerted to be vigilant about the outbreak of the disease, if any.

4. Border security formations and custom field formations have been alerted.

5. State of the north-east specially those bordering outbreak countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar and China have been alerted.

6. Nationwide surveillance is continuing. More than 1,43,000 samples have been tested at High Security Animal Disease Laboratory (HSADI), Bhopal since February, 2006.

7. Testing for Avian Influenza have also been started at Regional Level *viz.*, Regional Disease Diagnostic Laboratories, Kolkata, Bangalore, Pune and Jallandhar. So far about 37,000 samples have been tested in the regional laboratories.

8. The training of veterinary personnel in preparedness, control and containment is continuing.

9. A National workshop on Preparedness, Control and Containment of Avian Influenza was organized at Pune during May, 2007 and recently a Regional Workshop of the North-Eastern States (Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and West Bengal) was organized at Kolkata by Government of India from 26-28th July, 2007.

10. Custom authorities have been instructed not to clear any baggage of livestock products without getting it cleared by the quarantine officer first.

11. Guidelines issued to the states for further guidance to the poultry farmers.

12. States have already taken steps for preventing ingress of the disease and control measures.

CIFNET

2638. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the role of CIFNET in present day context of 'Skills Development';

(b) whether CIFNET can be termed as a Marine ITI institution;

(c) if not, whether CIFNET will be converted into a University;

(d) whether it is a fact that presently CIFNET produces a very poor and abysmal number of trained people; and

(e) the steps proposed to move CIFNET to the east coast to help to meet the new demand in coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The role of CIFNET in present day context of 'Skills Development' includes (i) providing trained manpower for manning ocean going fishing vessels, (ii) producing managers required for the fishing industry and (iii) creating expertise in fisheries, nautical and marine engineering disciplines for service personnel.

(b) No, Sir. CIFNET is already conducting graduate level course in Fisheries and Nautical Sciences with affiliation to Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), Kochi.

(c) No, Sir. There are no proposals in hand to convert CIFNET into a University.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) The CIFNET has already got a unit at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh besides one more at Chennai to meet the demand in the east coast.